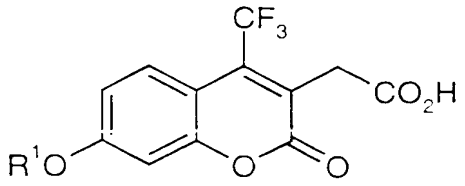
CLAIMS

1. An assay for testing for inhibitors of the enzyme CYP2C9 which comprises contacting the enzyme and a compound of formula (I):

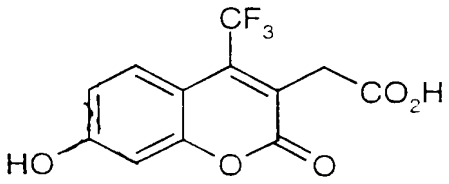


(I)

wherein R^1 represents C_{1-2}alkyl, with a test compound and measuring inhibition of O-dealkylation of the compound of formula (I) by the enzyme.

2. The assay according to claim 1 wherein R^1 is methyl.

3. The assay according to claim 1 or 2 wherein inhibition of O-dealkylation of the compound of formula (I) by the enzyme is measured by quantifying the compound of formula (II):



(II)

4. The assay according to claim 3 wherein the compound of formula (II) is quantified by fluorescence detection.

5. The assay according to claim 4 wherein the compound of formula (II) is quantified by scanning at excitation wavelength of 410 nm and an emission wavelength of 510 nm.

6. A compound of formula (I) or (II) as defined in claim 1 or 3.

7. A process for the production of a compound of formula (I) or (II) as defined in claim 1 or 3 which comprises:

a) reaction of resorcinol and a dialkyl trifluoroacetosuccinate wherein the alkyl groups are independently selected from C_{1-2} alkyl, in the presence of polyphosphoric acid;

b) for compounds of formula (I) reaction of the resulting 7-hydroxycoumarin with a compound of formula R^1Hal, wherein R^1 is C_{1-2} alkyl and Hal is halogen e.g. iodine or bromine; and

c) ester hydrolysis to give the acid of formula (I) or (II).

8. A method for reducing the CYP2C9 enzyme inhibitory activity of a compound, comprising the steps of identifying the compound as an inhibitor of CYP2C9 in an assay according to any one of claims 1 to 5; and thereafter producing a chemically modified version of the test compound in which the functionality suspected to be responsible for CYP2C9 inhibition is eliminated or changed.

9. A novel compound produced according to the method of claim 8.